

930

HEALTH ANXIETY SYMPTOMS IN 5-7-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN. THE CCC2000 BIRTH COHORT

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Background and aims: Hypochondriac worry about having a disease is proposed to originate in childhood, but very little research has addressed symptoms of hypochondriasis or health anxiety in childhood. The present study investigates the prevalence of health anxiety symptoms (HAS) and their association with physical health problems and mental problems in 5-7-year-old children.

Methods: HAS and physical and mental health were measured in 5-7-year old children (N=1,323 children, 49.7% boys) by parental reports using the Soma Assessment Interview, the Children's Somatization Inventory and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. Associations were examined using nonparametric techniques.

Results: HAS were reported in 17.6% and to be present 'a lot' in 2.4% (categorized as 'significant HAS'). Parental reported physical health problems such as general poor health and physical symptoms including functional somatic symptoms were associated with significant HAS. In children with functional somatic symptoms, associated impairment of and parental worries about these symptoms were more often reported among children with HAS, and increasingly often with significant HAS. HAS were also significantly associated with the presence of emotional symptoms, but not behavioral or peer problems.

Conclusions: The findings suggest that HAS are prevalent at 5-7 years of age and associated with child health problems, especially in the area of functional somatic symptoms and emotional symptoms.

931

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A SCHOOL-BASED EARLY DEPRESSION PREVENTION PROGRAM FOR KOREAN ADOLESCENT GIRLS

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Background: In 2006 in the U.S., the suicide rate for 15- to 24-year-olds was 9.9 per 100,000. Suicide is also the second leading cause of death in 11- to 20-year-olds in Korea. However, little research on early adolescent depression has been directed toward developing an early depression education program. Therefore, introducing depression prevention programs into the middle schools is an alternative approach to addressing the crisis of adolescent suicide.

Aim: To evaluate the effectiveness of a school-based early depression prevention program (SBEDPP) in improving the knowledge about depression and depressive symptoms of Korean middle school students.

Design: A quasi-experimental study. Sample: A convenience sample of 351 students attending a girls' middle school in South Korea.

Measurements: Subjects completed the questionnaire of Korean Adolescent Depression Knowledge (KADK), and the Reynolds Adolescent Depression Scale-second edition-Korean (RADS-2-K). Intervention: SBEDPP is based on cognitive behavior treatment developed by researcher.

Results: These middle school adolescent girls reported increased scores for the knowledge about depression at post-intervention. There were no significant differences in depressive symptoms between these adolescent girls and healthy normative samples ($t=-1.866$). Significant differences in adolescent girls for depressive symptoms between a pretest and a posttest were found. Several significant relationships with demographic variables of the participants were observed for the knowledge about depression and depressive symptoms.

Conclusions: SBEDPP was effective in improving depression knowledge and decreasing depressive symptoms of these adolescent girls. This study provides information to public health professionals working with adolescent girls which could be used to help adolescent girls to prevent depressive symptoms.